

ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE WEST AND EAST[ERN CHURCHES]



*'Our Lady of the Sign', Cathedral of St. Sophia
Veliky Novgorod (Russia) - first half of 12th century*

Between the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church there are canonical and doctrinal differences which can be rebuilt and recompiled.

The Catholic Church, unlike the relations it has with the 'Protestant' Churches born after the 'Reformation' of Martin Luther of the sixteenth century - which are considered as 'schismatic' and 'heretical' because are still in force the decrees of the Council of Trent (1545-1563) which have accepted within the Catholicism the defense of the doctrine, rejecting the accusations made by Luther with his '95 theses' and the contemporary approach based on the 'ecumenical dialogue' carried out by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) - has minimal differences with the Orthodox brothers, to whom the Roman Church recognizes, for example, the apostolic succession (ie the fact that the current Orthodox bishops derive their mandate directly from the first apostles of Christ, through the common belonging to the undivided Church that existed before the schism of 1054).

Other differences concern a particular theological concept, the orthodox non-recognition of the primacy of the pope and its prerogatives and the political influence that determined the current configuration of the Orthodox Church.

Among the minor differences it could be mentioned, for example, the tendency prevailed in the world of Orthodoxy according to which a local bishop can manage with absolute authority his own prerogatives, something that does not happen, at least in theory, in the Catholic Church, in which there are intermediate organizations on a national and state basis - the so-called 'Episcopal Conferences', born in the second half of the nineteenth century, therefore very recently - which act as a coordination between the local episcopates and the Rome office.

This particularity determines, in both the Catholic and the Orthodox world, a certain fragmentation and de-centralization of power.

Orthodoxy also contains the concept of "autocephaly", that is, the autonomy and 'self-foundation' of the individual national Churches, which identify themselves with the nation they belong to or in which they operate and not in the universal Church, indirectly confirming the 'vulnus' constituted by the non-recognition of the Petrine primacy and the attribute of 'catholicity' (i.e. of the eminent character of universality) which is proper to the Church of Rome until now.

The question of 'autocephaly', that is, the organization of the Orthodox Church on a national and state scale, poses two kinds of problems: the political and cultural identification of the 'national' Orthodox Churches with the State of belonging, with which they enter in symbiosis and sometimes in dependence (a feature that has probably been imitated by the same successive Protestant churches, which are also organized on a national basis in total autonomy) and the influence that governments can have on them, which find an element of prestige or political profit in controlling or directing the Church.

This problem has always been present in the history of Christianity - the relationship between the Church and the 'worldly powers' - since the events of its founder Jesus Christ, and the interpretation of relations between Church and State has been the object of reflection and indications both on the part of Jesus and his disciples, whose traces are in the Scriptures, in addition to the historical events lived by the Church itself.

In the Bible there are some indications on this relationship; to the few hints present in the Scriptures must be added the events lived by the Church in history and of this giving a theological interpretation - which is not directly present in the Scriptures - that allows interpolating the data with the historical plan of events.

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With regard to the canonical differences between the two Churches, the question of the 'primacy Petrine' concerns the acceptance of the existence of a high Church leader who is considered the successor of St. Peter - first Pope after Christ and his direct disciple - to whom Jesus Christ entrusted the task of 'grazing his sheep', that is, the totality of the body of the faithful, as reported by the Gospel of John, chapter 21:15-17:

«When they had eaten, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than these?". He replied: «Of course, Lord, you know that I love you». He said to him, "Feed my lambs". He told him again, for the second time: "Simon, son of John, do you love me?". He replied: «Of course, Lord, you know that I love you». He said to him, "Feed my sheep". He told him for the third time: "Simon, son of John, do you love me?". Peter was grieved for the third time to ask him, "Do you love me?".

And said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know I love you". Jesus answered him: "Feed my sheep"».

The pope would therefore have the supernatural faculty to “untie and bind”, that is, to create effective and legitimate relationships between earthly reality and that of the heavens, that is, the scope of divine decisions that oversees natural and human reality, as reported in the Gospel of Matthew 16:18-19:

[Jesus speaks] «And I say to you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and all that you will bind on earth will be bound in the heavens, and all that you loose on earth will be dissolved in heaven».

This reference represents the scriptural basis for the divine foundation of the papacy: it has divine characteristics because it was constituted by Christ himself, who in the pope saw his successor on Earth in time, and is an effective delivery because Christ is the son of God, his incarnation in a woman's body, as happened according to the announcement made by the archangel Gabriel to Mary mother of Jesus, as described in the Gospel of Luke 1:26-38:

«In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man of the house of David named Joseph. The virgin was called Maria. Entering her, she said: "Rejoice, full of grace: the Lord is with you". At these words she was very upset and wondered what a greeting like this meant. The angel said to her: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive a son, give him birth and call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father and he will reign forever over the house of Jacob and his kingdom will have no end». Then Mary said to the angel: "How will this be, since I do not know man?". The angel answered her: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will cover you with his shadow. Therefore he who is born will be holy and will be called the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, in her old age has also conceived a son and this is the sixth month for her, which was called sterile: nothing is impossible to God». Then Mary said: "Behold the servant of the Lord: come to me according to your word". And the angel moved away from her».

As Gabriel announced to Mary the birth of a son who "will reign forever over the house of Jacob and his kingdom will have no end" (Gospel of

Luke 1:33), so these characteristics also become the Church's ones, which is the heir of the covenant between God and the people of Israel/Jacob founded by the forefather Abraham (Book of Genesis 17:1-2: «When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the Lord appeared to him and said: "I am God the Almighty: walk before me and be whole: I will make my covenant between you and you and I will make you very, very numerous"») and of the subsequent realization of the Kingdom of God on Earth announced by Jesus.

The blessing and curse could also be part of the papal prerogatives, since God gave it to Abraham («I will bless those who bless you and those who curse you will curse», Book of Genesis, chapter 12:3).

The Kingdom announced by Jesus, the Kingdom of God on Earth, has been anticipated in his earthly preaching, is a historical reality in the making, a promise to be realized in the future and the interior dimension in which believers already live (Rom 14:17).

Therefore, the Petrine faculty of 'dissolving and binding', that is, of giving divine efficacy to decisions taken on Earth, is the peculiarity of papal power.

Recently, in 1870, in order to remove the Roman pontiff from the influence of worldly powers, the 'dogma' was established (ie a new truth of faith was ascribed that regularizes a present situation already 'de facto' in reality) of 'papal infallibility', according to which the Pope, in the exercise of his functions, is considered 'infallible', that is, claims divine assistance in the exercise of his function and in the definition of the doctrine.

The 22nd proposition of the "Dictatus papae", with which pope Gregory VII in 1075 defined in depth the areas of competence of the Roman pontiff, recited in a peremptory manner: «The Roman Church has never been wrong; nor, according to the testimony of the Scriptures, will it ever be mistaken for eternity» («Quod Romana ecclesia nunquam erravit nec imperpetuum scriptura testante errabit»). This statement is the main support in the papal magisterium for the subsequent formal declaration of dogma on the issue of 'papal infallibility'.

The subsequent affirmation of the 'Dictatus papae', number 23, further confirms the exceptional condition of the Roman pontiff: he, being in

continuity with the magistry of St. Peter the first Pope, also inherits the state of grace and holiness as well as the Petrine function : «Quod Romanus pontifex, canonice fuerit ordinatus, meritis beati Petri indubitanter efficitur sanctus testante sancto Ennodius Papiensi episcopo and multis sanctis patribus faventibus, sicut in decretis blessed Symachi pape continetur» («The Roman Pontiff, elected canonically, is without doubt, for the merits acquired by St. Peter, sanctified, according to what was affirmed by St. Ennodius Bishop of Pavia, and confirmed by many holy fathers favorable to him, as stated in the decrees of St. Simmachus Pope»).

It is therefore a 'holiness of function' obtained automatically for the merits of St. Peter (note the reference to the need for a canonically regular election).

Therefore, a pope in himself can 'untie and bind', and this is effective 'towards heaven' (that is, with God, who is the guarantor of the Pope's action on Earth, because the Church, and its leader who is the Pope, is a continuation of the mission of Jesus on Earth) and towards men, in the modes of government that the Gospel has assigned to the Church.

At the historical level, the negation of the Petrine primacy and its mediating function between Heaven and Earth led the Orthodox Churches to seek an autonomous organizational form that differentiated them from the papacy, but indirectly endorsed its truthfulness, assuming the form of 'autocephaly', the Orthodox Churches have abdicated to two characteristics peculiar to the Church, namely the merits of the succession of the popes and the function of 'universality', since the Church does not identify with a particular people but is an expression of Christ's mandate addressed to all peoples (Mt 24:14).

Another issue that separates the Orthodox Church from the Catholic one and which has formally determined the schism of 1054 is the formulation, within the 'Apostolic Creed' recited in the Roman Church of the so-called "Filioque question", ie the definition according to as for the Orthodox the Holy Spirit would proceed only from God and not also from Christ, as the Catholics instead affirm.

This change, which for the Orthodox represented a 'forcing' desired by the sovereigns of the Franks to impose their political hegemony on the Church, has determined the estrangement of the Orientals by the Pope and the consequent self-organization of the Orthodox Churches, it alternates the influence of worldly powers, up to risking annulment under the Soviet Union regime.

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The problem of the non-descent of the Holy Spirit from God and also from Christ is a factor of continuity with other two religions that formally refer to a common Abrahamic origin, namely Judaism and Islam, the first antecedent to Christianity, the second following of some centuries.

In particular, it is possible to find in the three religions mentioned - Judaism, Islam and Christianity in the Orthodox form - the same influence of the Satanic order, which is expressed in a 'negative Christology', parallel and external to Christianity expressed in the Catholic form, while its 'positive' and explicit form was manifested during the first centuries of Christianity in the modalities discussed and amended by the various Ecumenical Councils. In the case of Judaism, Islam and Orthodox Christianity, heresy has also determined the schism.

If Judaism denies that Christ was the prophet expected and cited in the Scriptures (for example, the conception of a virgin, prophet Isaiah 7:14: «Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin will conceive and bear a son, that he will call Emmanuel»; the birth in Bethlehem, from the prophet Micah 5:1: «And you, Bethlehem of Ephratah, so small to be among the villages of Judah, will come to you from me who must be the ruler in Israel; its origins are from antiquity, from the most remote days»; the star (the comet) that signals its birth, in the year 7 BC, from the Book of Numbers 24:7: «I see it, but not now, I contemplate, but not closely: a star rises from Jacob and a scepter rises from Israel, splits the temples of Moab and the skull of all the sons of Set»; the adoration of the Magi, by the prophet Isaiah 60:3: «The nations will walk in your light, kings to the splendor of your rising» and Psalm 72:10: «The kings of Tarsis and of the gods sun bring tributes, the kings of Saba and of Seba offer gifts»; the flight into Egypt, from the prophet Hosea

11:1: «When Israel was a child, I loved him and from Egypt I called my son») and therefore does not attribute to him even the attribute of “son of God”, Islam - which is born several centuries after the earthly life of Christ and as a theoretically new religion - mentions him, therefore recognizes him as a prophet of God, but still partially accepts his earthly life, since it does not consider death on the cross as possible and denies that witnesses have seen this, while God would have called Christ to himself without passing him from death (from the Qu’ran IV:157-158: «They said: "We have killed the Christ, Jesus son of Mary, messenger of God", while neither killed him nor crucified him but it seemed to them... but God raised him to himself, and God is powerful and wise").

This eventuality mentioned in the Qur'an would negate both the correspondence of the Scriptures with the life of Jesus and the atoning sacrifice of Christ. In this case it is understandable to realize who could be interested in an evolution of this type of the history of Christianity.

Islam in the Qur'an denies that the Trinity is the form of God's existence in creation, and therefore also that Christ is born as a child of God.

In Sura CXII:1-4 we can read: «Say: "Allah is Unique, Allah is the Absolute He has not begotten, He has not been begotten and no one is equal to Him"», and in Qur'an IV:171 there is: «O People of Scripture, do not exceed in your religion and do not tell about Allah other than the truth. The Messiah Jesus, son of Mary is nothing but a messenger of Allah, His word that He placed in Mary, a spirit from Him [coming]. So believe in Allah and His Messengers. Do not say "Three", stop! It will be better for you. Indeed Allah is a unique God. Would he have a son? Glory to him! To him belongs all that is in the heavens and all that is on earth. Allah is sufficient as a guarantor».

The quotation Quran VI:101 is very revealing: «[if God were the] Original creator of the heavens and the earth, how could he have a son if he does not have a companion and if he alone has created all things?».

In this passage two characteristics of 'Allah' are affirmed: that God-'Allah' could not have a child except through a woman companion, and that the Supreme God, creator of Jesus Christ, would have created everything by himself.

And so, if Allah says he can not create anything from nothing and can only generate through a woman, who would be this Allah in order to dispute the divine sonship of Christ?

Christianity affirms, through a father of the Church lived two centuries before the birth of Islam, St. Augustine of Hippo, that angels can not create anything from nothing. This hypothesis is confirmed by a doctor of the Catholic Church, Saint Thomas Aquinas of the thirteenth century, who in the 'Summa theologiae' affirms that the angels (meaning angels both the real angels and the demons, which are angels decayed) are not able to create from nothing, as God has done, but can only do so by manipulating the material already created in the universe or by activating energies present in the intermediate dimension in which they live.

This fact determines the fundamental difference between God and the angels: these, being creatures, can only create if they assemble matter or energies already present in the universe and therefore already created by God. So, their would not be an act of creation but only of manipulation.

Therefore, if a "God" says of himself that he can not create from nothing (as God has done with the universe and with Jesus, which was generated by "Holy Spirit" and without the use of matter) he is saying that in reality he is not God.

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Orthodox Christianity, denying the procession (ie descent, action) of the Holy Spirit by Christ, denies its saving efficacy, even if it believes that he is the son of God who has risen.

In this way the effectiveness of Christianity would stop at the death and resurrection of Christ, which would have value only for himself, while its efficacy would be denied compared to the cancellation of original sin and the power of death over the world, which were caused from Satan, and to whom Christ was opposed. Therefore the death and resurrection of Jesus would lose the value of salvation for all men, and that is what Satan wants to happen to Christianity.

In what was then the protest of the Orthodox world towards the influence of political power on the Church, through the imposition of the modification of the text of the 'Apostolic Creed' desired by the sovereigns

of the Franks, it is obtained - and this is a typical modality of the Satanic action - an opposite result compared to the primordial intention that the Orthodox wanted to fight: they obtained the submission of the world of orthodoxy to worldly power and, even more serious but apparently secondary, the division of the Church precisely in the name of the fight against powers that at the time wanted to deprive it of its autonomy.

This is part of the dynamic of history: if the Kingdom of Christ was not immediately realized at the moment of Jesus' first coming, it is inevitable - and the Bible itself has been foretold and witnessed - that history would have been the place where would have been manifested the tension between the Kingdom and the anti-Kingdom until the glorious return of Christ, and this also applies to the Church. In fact, as St. Peter says in his first Letter, the judgment will begin first «from the house of God» (1 Pet 4:17).

This means that the defense of the dogma, when it is founded, is more important than the further concerns that derive from it.

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The same can be said about the choice of Christianity as a 'state religion' by the Roman Empire in its descending phase: if it is true that the decision of the emperor Constantine in 313 to allow public worship of Christianity that the persecutions, arrests and executions ceased directly, it is also true that the empire maintained a utilitarian attitude towards the Christian religion, which saw itself as a stabilizing factor in the face of the numerous factors of crisis which, after only another 150 years, would have led to the collapse of the Western part of the Roman empire.

With the edict of Emperor Galerius (250-311), who preceded Constantine's decision of two years, persecutions were suspended and Christian public worship was permitted, as the text reads:

«Among all the provisions we have taken in the interest and for the good of the state, we first wanted to restore everything according to ancient Roman laws and institutions, and to make sure that even Christians who had abandoned the religion of the ancestors, return to healthy intention».

Here by 'religion of the ancestors' the emperor means ancient pre-Christian Judaism. In the text emerges all the incomprehension of the

emperor concerning the nature of Christianity, which he considers inexplicably different from both the traditional Roman religion and the 'previous' Christian worship, namely Judaism. This led to confusion and turmoil, as Christians did not want to return to their 'previous religion'.

So the Christian message had not yet been fully understood, so much so that this coexistence between the situations was a source of conflict right away, although the apostles (Peter and Paul at first) have instructed their disciples to 'respect the civilian authorities'. In fact, the emperor does not seem to understand what has happened (we are already almost 300 years after Christ) and there is no explanation of how the Christian religion is different from that of 'traditional Christian' (the Judaism) or because it is so dissimilar from the traditional Roman worship, therefore he says that Christians have 'lost their heads' following 'new precepts' (refers to evangelical love) nor did they understand the meaning of Eucharistic meetings.

«But, for various reasons, Christians had been struck by such obstinacy and madness that they no longer wanted to follow the traditions of the ancients, perhaps established by their own ancestors. According to their understanding, they adopted laws that they strictly observed and gathered crowds of people of all kinds in various places.

So when we promulgated an edict by which they were ordered to conform to the uses of the ancestors, many were prosecuted, many were even put to death. Nevertheless, although most of them persisted in their own conviction, we have seen that some of them neither paid the reverence and fear of the gods to them, nor did they worship the God of Christians.

Considering our benevolence and the custom for which we usually grant forgiveness to all, we have decided to extend our mercy even in their case, and without any delay, so that there may be Christians again and [so that] the buildings may be rebuilt in which they used to meet, on the condition that they do not abandon themselves to actions contrary to the established order.

With another document we will instruct the governors on what they will have to observe. Therefore, in accordance with our forgiveness, Christians will have to pray to their god for our health, that of the state, and of themselves, so that the integrity of the state is re-established everywhere and they can lead a peaceful life in their homes».

The goal of the religious policy of Constantine was instead to create a unique religion of the empire in which the cults of the peoples belonging to it converged, and thanks to this revitalize the spirit of belonging of the same to the imperial team.

The intent was therefore instrumental, and what seemed to be a benevolent concession - the interruption of physical persecutions towards Christians - soon turned into a protection against the Church (so much so that Constantine himself wanted the first ecumenical Council of the Church, that of Nicea, evidently outclassing the prerogatives of the pope), which has had to struggle stubbornly throughout the centuries, through the popes and saints, to recognize the supremacy of the spiritual sphere over the temporal one.

Constantine, in contrast to what is thought, did not forbid pagan worship, but allowed Christianity and paganism to come together because he had sensed the natural expansive force of the Christian religion.

If, moreover, a part of the Christian people welcomed the 'peace' between the empire and the Church, another part, a minority but a combative one, sensed the danger of an agreement with the worldly powers and chose - as the first martyrs of the Christianity - the way of the 'martyrdom of the heart'.

In fact, many Christians moved away from the cities of the Roman Empire and went to live in deserts where, under difficult physical conditions and in almost total isolation, they gave life to forms of monastic and collective hermit life, managing to fight from there new forms of infidelities that appeared in the Church under the face of new Christological heresies.

Protagonists of this monastic movement, who went to live in the saltpetre deserts of the Egyptian valley of Wadi el-Natrun, were the father of Christian monks, Antonio, and his disciple and bishop Athanasius of Alexandria (III-IV century). He was the protagonist, together with Bishop Alessandro, of a battle against the ideas of Arius, a priest who supported a different conception of the nature of Christ: he admitted the divine origin of Jesus, but considered it not consubstantial to God (ie not belonging to the same substance as the Father) and then created after God as man has been. This concept actually made Christ a step under God and did not consider him an incarnation but a creation of his.

The Council of Nicea of 325 produced the text of an anathema (a curse, more than an excommunication) thus formulated: «Those who then say: "There was (once) when (Jesus) there was not", and: "Before being generated there was not", and that from the non-being was generated or from another person or essence they say to be or created, or transformable or changeable the Son of God, (these) them anathematizes the Catholic Church».

The dispute over the nature of Christ may seem unimportant, but it has occupied Christianity for a long time because many emperors and priests have embraced the Arian heresy (named after the priest Ario) for political and schismatic purposes. The formulation of a "lower" nature of Christ has paved the way for both theological speculations and an attack on doctrine. The explanation of the Arian heresy lies in the consideration that Christ, being in fact of the very nature of God, was not created but "begotten": this means that Christ, being God, was not created by anyone (since God exists before the time), and therefore when we speak of "creation" of Christ we should speak rather of his "generation", that is of his birth in the body of a woman but coming from the mind of God.

A further explanation to the meaning of this type of dispute will take place a few centuries later, when in the Qur'an 'Allah' will state, as we have already said, that "Allah is Unique [...] He did not generate, was not generated and nobody it is the same as Him "(Sura CXII:1-4).

So it is about the nature and characteristics of Christ that, in the history of Christianity as of other religions, most of the resistance has been concentrated. And this is another explanation of how antagonisms to Christianity have a strong theological root, since they affect people or entities who are nevertheless deeply aware of it.

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The following is the complete text of the "Apostolic Symbol" as it is recited in the Catholic sphere. In this version is included the formula of the "Filioque":

"I believe in one God, / omnipotent Father, / creator of heaven and of the earth, / of all visible and invisible things.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, born of the Father before all the ages: / God from God, / Light from Light,

True God from true God, / begotten, not created, /
of the same substance as the Father; / through him all things were
created. / For us men / and for our salvation
descended from heaven / and by the work of the Holy Spirit
he became incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary and became man.
He was crucified for us under Pontius Pilate,
he died / he was buried.
On the third day he rose again, / according to the Scriptures, / he ascended
into heaven,
he sits at the right hand of the Father. / And again it will come, in glory,
to judge the living and the dead, / and his kingdom will have no end.
I believe in the Holy Spirit, / who is Lord and gives life, /
and proceeds from the Father and the Son, / and with the Father and the
Son he is worshiped
and glorified, / and spoke through the prophets.
I believe the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.
Professed only one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
I await the resurrection of the dead / and the life of the coming world.
Amen".

It should be noted that the "old-catholic" Church, founded after Vatican Council I of 1870 and which unites former Catholics who have not accepted the results of that Council (primarily the proclamation of the dogma of "papal infallibility") recites a formula of the "Creed" which does not provide for the formulation of the "Filioque" ("I believe in the Holy Spirit, / who is Lord and gives life, / and proceeds from the Father *and* [also from] *the Son*").

The text of the "Apostolic Creed" instead as ratified by the I Council of Nicea of 325 is as follows:

"We believe in one God, the omnipotent Father, the creator of all visible and invisible things.

And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, eternally begotten by the Father, that is from the substance of the Father, God from God, light from light, true God from true God, generated not created, of the same substance of the Father, through which all things have been done, both those that are in heaven, and those that are on Earth.

For us men and for our salvation he descended from heaven, became incarnate, became man, suffered and resurrected on the third day, ascended into heaven, came to judge the living and the dead.

We believe in the Holy Spirit.

[Here is the text of the anathema:] But those who say, 'There was a time when he did not exist'; and: 'before it was born it was not'; and 'that did not arise from what existed, or from another hypostasis or substance that the Father, or who claim that the Son of God can change, these the Catholic and apostolic Church condemns them'".

The Council of Constantinople of 381, subsequent to the First Council of Nicaea, established the division of the spheres of influence between the two Churches on the respective fractions of the Roman empire, namely of Rome on the Western side and of Constantinople (today Istanbul) on the Eastern part.

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So it is evident that the Holy Spirit proceeds in the same way from God (because it is the spirit of God) and from Jesus, being the same thing as the "Paraclete Spirit" promised by Jesus.

For the same definitiveness of revelation in Christ, now the way to reach the Father is only Christ, and the name of Christ is the same name of God.

In the Old Testament, that is, in pre-Christian Judaism, one of the ways indicated to call God, a name in itself unpronounceable for the Jews in excessive respect of the precept contained in Exodus 20:7 and Deuteronomy 5:11 ("You shall not in vain pronounce the name of the Lord, your God"), was the tetragrammaton "YHWH"; for an absurd coincidence, even the title with which Jesus was condemned to death, namely his claim to be "(Jesus Nazareno) the king [the expected prophet] of the Jews", in Hebrew has the same initials, namely "YHWH".

When God first revealed himself to Moses (in Exodus 20:2) he said: "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the servile condition". The Hebrew word translated into Italian for 'the Lord' is the tetragrammaton with which the Jews indicate the name of God, since the Latin inscription "Iesus Nazareus Rex Iudaeorum" in Hebrew is rendered with the same initials as "YHWH".

In the Gospel of John, in chapter 19:16-22 reads:

«They took Jesus and he, carrying the cross, went to the place called the Skull, in Hebrew Gòlgota, where they crucified him and with him two others, one on one side and one on the other, and Jesus in the middle. Pilate also composed the inscription and placed it on the cross; it was written to you: "Jesus the Nazarene, the king of the Jews". Many Jews read this inscription, because the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city; it was written in Hebrew, in Latin and in Greek. The chief priests of the Jews then said to Pilate: "Do not write: 'The king of the Jews', but: 'He said: I am the king of the Jews'. Pilate answered: "What I wrote, I wrote"».

Therefore, the Jews present linger on that written, trilingual, which stood on the head of Jesus, and ask Pilate (the fact that it is reported in the biblical text is indicative) to correct it, adding: "He said [this]...". Pilate, however, does not, and adds the expression: "What I wrote, I wrote".

The absurdity lies in the fact that the phrase "Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews", in Hebrew, has the same initial consonants contained in the word "YaHWeH" (God), while the inscription Christ was "Yeshua Hanotsri Wemelek Hayehudim", phrase meant exactly "(This Christ) is God", precisely the blasphemous title that Christ had attributed to himself and for which the Jews wanted to deny in all your action the reality of Christ.

In that scene a first realization on the cross of what Jesus wanted to do was consummated: to announce the incarnation of God and the arrival of the King of the Jews.

The result is that at the end of the process and the death of Jesus on the cross to lose was the Sanhedrin, that was the Jewish authority that should have welcomed and recognized his reality, both for the numerous signs he had made during his earthly existence and for the prophecies he had achieved.

Those who had left him condemned for the first time, albeit reluctantly, namely Pontius Pilate, a Roman Governor competent for Judea and who during the passion had declared that he did not find anything reprehensible in the Nazarene and then - for the insistence of the crowd and hostility of the Jewish authorities - had condescended to the condemnation of Jesus, hoping until the end to save him, was the first to recognize the divine sonship of Christ, since he did not modify the writing as requested by the Jews and because he understood that there was something different about that man. Two Romans, two non-Jewish pagans - Pilate and the centurion soldier - were the first 'strangers' (not-Jews) to recognize in that post-mortem context that Jesus was the Christ announced by the Scriptures.

The Trinity, which is the foundation of the faith in Jesus Christ, is configured as Father, Holy Spirit and Jesus, the son of God. The Holy Spirit proceeds exactly, in a triangular relationship, from the Father and the Son. It is like what happens with a man's or woman's body: we distinguish the body (the Son), the Father (the mind, the intelligence) and the heart, the feeling (the Spirit is the soul).

A person can not be defined by dividing each of these characteristics, but they are necessary to each other to live, nor can they operate separately, just as "reason" (the mind) and "the heart" (the soul) they represent intellect and feeling, respectively, as we presently represent them and as already indicated in the Bible.

The denial of the procession of the Holy Spirit also from the Christ constitutes both the denial of direct indications present in the New Testament and the saving efficacy of Christ for all men.

And so it is possible that in this case too the shift of the energy of communion (in this case the unity of the Church) has been capitalized for political purposes, for example to make of the Church of the East what Constantine had wanted to do with the whole empire, that is in this case to separate the Eastern Church from Rome to limit that energy to the only area of Eastern Europe, while the Roman Church was under the control of the Franks, who gave birth in the year 800 the Holy Roman Empire, a Christian version of the Western Roman Empire, while the Eastern Roman Empire survived for another thousand years, in an isolation guaranteed by the ecclesial division.

A similar dynamic happened with the successive separations of Christianity, in this case only of the Christianity of the West: the 'Protestant Reformation' of the sixteenth century made sure that, through the schism and the modification of the formula of transubstantiation of the Eucharist, the "energy of communion" constituted by the Eucharistic prayer and the sacrifice of Christ in body and blood were shifted to political ends to found the political autonomy of the Protestant world from the papacy, while the consummation of a papal nomination monarchy - the English crown of King Henry VIII (1491-1547) - of the divorce and the subsequent establishment of an autonomous Protestant Church headed by

the sovereign constituted the basis for the subsequent territorial-economic expansion of the Kingdom of England.

It is therefore possible that the separation between the empire of the West and the Eastern Empire and the respective Churches, already ratified by the Council of Constantinople in 381, constituted the element of continuity in respect to the intention of the political power to control the modalities of expansion of Christianity.

The antagonism between Christ and Satan continues in the creation and in the history, since either they are completely reconciled in the control of Satan or are in that of Christ.

It is evident that a 'conservative' reading of the relationship between political and religious power, which has gone through the whole of Christian history, can consider the first "good in itself" or because it is powerful or because it is legitimized by a 'sweetened' reading of religion, or perhaps because it indicates 'the natural order' of the world that is under the yoke of Satan (Gospel of John 14:30: "because the prince of the world comes").

* * *

Regarding the relationship between the Catholic Church of the West and the emperors, what was done by Pope Gregory VII (1025 -1085), who was pontiff from 1073 until his death, who, in opposition to emperor Henry IV, issued the "Dictatus papae", a series of propositions in which he clarified the prerogatives of the pontiff regarding a series of questions.

This document represents the summit of the configuration of the papacy (later completed by the formulation of the "dogma of pontifical infallibility" in 1870 by pope Pius IX) and the spiritual and temporal aspects of the pontiff are affirmed with vigor, even with regard to non-Catholic Churches.

Subsequently, Pope Pius XI in 1925 published the encyclical "Quas primas" on the royalty of Christ, with which the feast of "Christ the King" was instituted, shortly after the appearance of fascism in Europe, which reads: "This Kingdom [of Christ] in the Gospels is presented in such a way that men must prepare to enter through penitence, and can not enter it except through faith and baptism", but also: "On the other hand, whoever took Christ's power over all temporal things would be seriously mistaken,

since He received from the Father an absolute right over all created things, so that everything is subject to his will" (from the italian version).

Also in this case, faced with the impetuous advance of the fascist regimes that opposed the social-communist parties born after the publication of the "Communist Manifesto" by Marx and Engels in 1848, the pontiff reiterated the spiritual character of the kingdom of Christ, but he did not disdain to indicate that his earthly realization is one of the tasks of history.

Pope Pius XI himself witnessed the aggravation of the situation in the Church and in Europe in the 1930s and 1940s, and tried to publicly denounce the excesses of the Nazi-Fascist movements with the encyclical "Mit Brennender Sorge" of 1937. He revealed in particular the methods "of hatred, defamation, of a deep, hidden and evident aversion against Christ and his Church, triggering a struggle that has been fed into a thousand different sources, and has served everyone the means" coming in particular from Nazi Germany.

* * *

Overthrowing a situation that had been created since the days of the "first" Holy Roman Empire, that of Charlemagne who had himself crowned emperor by Pope Leo III on Christmas night of the year 800, asking the pontiff to ratify a decision already taken from the political power, pope Gregory VII, following the developments that had taken relations between the emperor and the papacy in Europe, he wanted to reiterate from the papal point of view which were the respective prerogatives: in particular he attributed to the pope the possibility of revoking the position of emperor, while up to that time and from the birth of the Holy Roman Empire in the nineteenth century had been political power (memory is the modification desired by the Carolingians of the text of the 'Credo') to influence the papacy.

The text of the "Dictatus papae" (27 propositions on the government of the Church) is found in a collection of letters of the same pontiff, between two missives dated March 1075. It was composed by him and has been operational since the next decade of his pontificate.

The text says (we are twenty one years after the schism of 1054 between the Church of the East and the Church of the West):

	Latin original	Translation into English
I	«Quod Romana ecclesia a solo Domino sit fundata».	The Roman Catholic Church was founded solely by God.
II	«Quod solus Romanus pontifex iure dicatur universalis».	Only the Roman-Catholic pontiff has the right to be referred to as "(maximum) pontiff and universal".
III	«Quod ille solus possit deponere episcopos vel reconciliare».	Only the Pope can lay down or re-establish the bishops.
IV	«Quod legatus eius omnibus episcopis presit in concilio etiam inferioris gradus et adversus eos sententiam depositionis possit dare».	In any Council, a delegate of his, even if obviously of a lesser degree, has authority superior to that of any bishop, and may issue a sentence of deposition against them.
V	«Quod absentes papa possit deponere».	The Pope can depose the absentees.
VI	«Quod cum excommunicatis ab illo inter cetera nec in eadem domo debemus manere».	That, among other things, one can not live under the same roof with those he has excommunicated.
VII	«Quod illi soli licet pro temporis necessitate novas leges condere, novas plebes congregare, de canonica abbatiam facere et e contra, divitem episcopatum dividere et inopes unire».	Only the Pope is permitted, according to necessity, to enact new laws (canonical), to gather new congregations [ie to unite or to create new religious congregations], to found abbeys or canonical houses; and, on the other hand, divide the rich dioceses and unite the poor ones.
VIII	«Quod solus possit uti imperialibus insigniis».	Only the Pope can use (he can dispose of) the imperial insignia (he has exclusive rights over the imperial institution).
IX	«Quod solius pape pedes omnes principes deosculentur».	All the princes have to kiss their feet only to the Pope (it was an act of reverence and submission to the pontiff).
X	«Quod illius solius nomen in ecclesiis recitetur».	That only His name is pronounced in the churches (primarily or with respect to its primacy over the emperor).
XI	«Quod hoc unicum est nomen in mundo».	May his name be the only one in the whole world [there is only one pontiff maximum].
XII	«Quod illi liceat imperatores deponere».	Only he is allowed to depose the emperors.
XIII	«Quod illi liceat de sede ad sedem necessitate cogente episcopos transmutare».	The Pope can transfer the bishops as needed.
XIV	«Quod de omni ecclesia quocunque voluerit clericum valeat ordinare».	He has the power to ordain a priest of any Church, in any territory (it is probable that here he hints at the universal power of the pontiff also on the other Christian Churches as well as the Roman Catholic Church).

XV	«Quod ab illo ordinatus alii ecclesie preesse potest, sed non militare; et quod ab aliquo episcopo non debet superiorem gradum accipere».	He whom he ordained can lead another Church, but can not wage war on him; moreover he can not receive a higher rank from any other bishop [the papal legate is subdued and depends only on the pope].
XVI	«Quod nulla synodus absque precepto eius debet generalis vocari».	That no synod is defined as "general" without His order (obviously to the detriment of the invasions of 'political' power in the ecclesial realm of the Pope alone).
XVII	«Quod nullum capitulum nullusque liber canonicus habeatur absque illius auctoritate».	That a text can be declared canonical only with His authority.
XVIII	«Quod sententia illius a ullo debeat retractari et ipse omnium solus retractare possit».	That any of His judgments can not be reformed by anyone; on the contrary, He can reform any judgment issued by others.
XIX	«Quod a nemine ipse iudicare debeat».	That He can not be judged by anyone.
XX	«Quo nullus audeat condemnare apostolicam sedem appellentem».	That no one can condemn those who have appealed to the Holy See.
XXI	«Quod maiores cause cuiscunque ecclesie ad eam referri debeant».	That all the 'maiores causae' (the most important questions) of any Church must be brought before Him.
XXII	«Quod Romana ecclesia nunquam erravit nec imperpetuum scriptura testante errabit».	The Roman Church has never failed; nor, according to the testimony of the Scriptures, will he ever be wrong for eternity.
XXIII	«Quod Romanus pontifex, si canonice fuerit ordinatus, meritis beati Petri indubitanter efficitur sanctus testante sancto Ennodio Papiensi episcopo ei multis sanctis patribus faventibus, sicut in decretis beati Symachi pape continetur».	That the Roman Pontiff, elected canonically, is undoubtedly, for the merits acquired by St. Peter, sanctified, according to what was affirmed by St. Ennodius bishop of Pavia, and confirmed by many holy fathers favorable to him, as stated in the decrees of St. Simmaco Pope (is a "holiness of function" attributed to the grace acquired by St. Peter).
XXIV	«Quod illius precepto et licentia subiectis liceat accusare».	That, under His command and with his consent, the subordinates have the right to present accusations (in general it refers to the right of appeal addressed to the pope).
XXV	«Quod absque synodali conventu possit episcopus deponere et reconciliare».	He can depose or resettle bishops without convening a synod.
XXVI	«Quod catholicus non habeatur, qui non concordat Romane ecclesie».	One who is not in communion with the Roman Catholic Church is not to be considered Catholic.
XXVII	«Quod a fidelitate iniquorum subiectos potest absolvere».	He can loosen the subjects of unfair principles from fidelity [he can order non-obedience to princes].

In the Acts of the Apostles, St. Paul, in the famous speech before the Athenians with whom he explained the 'new faith' to the Greek pagans, affirms: «Now, he [God] addresses an order to men: everyone everywhere must be converted. God set a day in which he will judge the world with justice» (Acts 17:30-31, from the translation of the 'Tilc' Bible into Italian; in the 2008 CEI translation we read: «Now God, passing over the times of ignorance, He orders men that everyone and everywhere must convert himself»).

Thus, already at the beginning of Paul's preaching addressed to the pagans, the need for preaching by the Church and for conversion by the world is affirmed, because Christ is the definitive revelation of God after original sin, and judgment will proceed starting from the recognition of the divine sonship of Christ (Gospel of Matthew 10:32: «[Christ-God said:] Therefore whoever recognizes me before men, I will also recognize him before my Father who is in heaven»).